

ORATION

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HON. THOMAS J. MACKEY,
OF SOUTH CAROLINA.



AT THE

Reunion of Veterans of the Mexican War,

IN WASHINGTON CITY,

December 6, 7 and 8, 1883.

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ORATION

OF

HON. THOMAS J. MACKEY, Of South Carolina.

[Extract from the Official Proceedings published in THE VEDETTE of December 21, 1883.]

The beautiful scene presented under the gas-light by the tasteful display of banners, plants, elegantly dressed ladies and gentlemen, who had been invited by the executive committee of arrangements, reflected great credit upon Mr. Abner and the committee on decorations. The most perfect order prevailed. The music, under management of Comrade Prosperi, was excellent.

On the platform were seated President J. W. Denver, of Ohio; 1st Vice-President, M. D. Manson, of Ind.; Gen. Albert Pike and Gen. T. T. Crittenden, V. P's. for the District of Columbia; Gen. W. S. Rosecrans, Gen. Horace Brooks, and Secretary A. M. Kenaday, the three last named being specially requested to represent the California veterans; Marshall A. H. Reynolds, Col. Robert Klotz, Gen. E. L. Dana, J. E. Arthur, John Kritzer, Wm. Kerlin, and Hugh Kerr, of Penn.; Gen. James Cravens, S. L. McFadin, and Col. O. P. H. Cary, of Ind.; A. J. Robertson, John Conwell, George Mason, and Col. J. F. Chapman, of Ohio; Gen. Daniel Ruggles, Gen. W. B. Taliaferro, Capt. J. F. Milligan and Osmond Peters, of Va.; Col. G. A. Porterfield, and M. I. Dorn, of W. Va.; Senator John A. Logan, Hon. W. R. Morrison, Maj. S. P. Tufts, Col. Andrew F. Rodgers, J. W. Wilbanks, and Dr. J. W. Slade, of Ill.; Henry A. McGlenen and T. Knower, of Mass.; Gen. N. P. Viall and B. B. Manchester, of R. I.; Maj. H. Gaines, Col. J. M. Turner, J. R. Riley, and Gen. J. E. Kerrigan, of N. Y.; Capt. John McGowan, and F. D. Clark, of N. J.; Maj. A. J. Dorn,

Daniel Murphy, and W. H. Sibley, of Texas; Gen. A. H. Colquitt and Gen. J. S. Longstreet, of Ga.; John L. Cantwell, of N. C.; Col. W. B. Stanley, T. J. Mackey, J. D. Blanding, K. G. Billings, Zach. Carty, R. J. Gladney, W. B. Lomax, Thomas Beggs, and G. W. Curtis, of S. C.; F. M. Chrisman, of Ark.; Capt. Geo. V. Hebb, of Ala.; Col. James Walker, the artist whose "Battle of Chapultepec" adorns the Senate gallery of the United States; C. P. Wood, of Mich.; Col. J. C. McGinnis and A. B. Pearson, of St. Louis, Mo.; Senator John S. Williams, A. J. Morey, and Col. J. G. Craddock, of Ky.; Treasurer Samuel V. Niles. Lieut. 16th Inf.; Maj.-Gens. Stewart Van Vliet, J. J. Reynolds, William H. Emory, Peter V. Hagner, Adjt.-Gen. R. H. Drum, Gen. Thomas Duncan, Gen. B. Alvord, Gen. B. H. Hill, Gen. James Oakes, Gen. H. J. Hunt, Col. Alex. Montgomery, Col. A. J. Dallas, Col. James Belger, Col. Geo. D. Patten, Capt. J. S. Garland, Capt. Ed. Allsworth, and others of the U. S. Army; Capt. Louis S. Gelan, of Col.; Capt. John G. Fury, Capt. Wm. A. Barnes, Louis F. Beeler, and Wm. Williams, of Baltimore; J. W. Branson, A. J. Brock, and W. H. Porter, of Tenn.; A. H. Parker, R. R. Wilson, and Martin Costello, of New Orleans, La.; J. M. Hefley and John B. Bothwell, of Iowa; E. Welter, of Wis.; Rear-Adm. A. Ludlow Case, and Wm. Rogers Taylor, U. S. N.; Gen. Edward F. Beale and Thomas Young, formerly lieutenants in the Navy, and others.

President Denver introduced Comrade Thomas J. Mackey as the chosen orator of the occasion, who was received with hearty greetings.

THE ORATION.

Mr. President and Comrades of the Mexican War :

By your favor, I have been assigned the delicate duty of reciting history in the presence of those who have acted history. In so doing, I shall violate the prudent counsel of a distinguished teacher of modern languages, who advised his scholars on graduating, always to speak their French among Germans, and their German among Frenchmen.

The dust of more than a third of a century has gathered over the curtain that fell upon the last scene of that splendid drama in which you bore honorable parts on the stage of actual conflict. I can but lift that curtain for a brief moment, while we glance through the long vista of thirty-seven years upon scenes which to us are still living memories, while others must glean them from the historic page, or perchance, hear them recited at the household altar, where

'The broken soldier kindly bade to stay,
Sits by his fire and talks the night away;
Weeps o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
Shoulders his crutch and shows how fields were won.'

The war with Mexico had its origin in the act of Congress of January 10th, 1845, providing for the annexation of Texas. The act was ratified by that republic July 4th, 1845, and Texas thus became a State in the American Union.

She had already maintained her independence for ten years against Mexico, the parent country, whose authority her people had resisted with unequalled prowess and varying success on many fields of battle. The critic who questions the political morality of the act of annexation may be fully answered by referring to the fact that both England and France had recognized the independence of the Republic of Texas long before she applied for admission into our Union.

Mexico resolved to nullify this act by force of arms. She asserted her title to Texas, and further claimed that the true western boundary of that State was the river Nueces, whereas the Texans claimed the country westward to the Rio Grande. In view of the aggressive attitude of Mexico, General Zachary Taylor, at the head of an army of about four thousand men, chiefly regulars, was ordered into the disputed territory, which he entered July 29th, 1845, establishing his camp at Corpus Christi.

Early in 1846 he moved to the Rio Grande opposite the city of Matamoras, Mexico. Here he built Fort Brown. On the 24th of April, 1846, Captain Thornton, with a company of the 2d Dragoons, was ordered up the river to reconnoiter. He fell into an ambuscade, and being surrounded by a force seven times stronger than his own, he was compelled to surrender, after a gallant resistance, having sixteen of his command killed on the field.

Soon after this the Mexican forces attacked Fort Brown, and were handsomely repulsed. On May 8th General Taylor, with 2,300 men, met and defeated the Mexican army, six thousand strong, under the command of General Arista, at Palo Alto. In this battle Colonel Charles May of the 2d Dragoons, as knightly a soldier as ever drew sword in battle, made his famous charge, capturing two batteries of Mexican artillery and taking prisoner Major-General La Vega, a distinguished officer of the Mexican army. On the next day Arista, having been largely reinforced, made a stand a few miles distant from Palo Alto (the high plain,) at Resaca de la Palma (or the Ravine of Palms,) and was there again defeated by Taylor's army, the Mexican loss being 1,000 and ours but 110. On May 18 General Taylor crossed the Rio Grande and took possession of the city of Matamoras.

It is a noteworthy fact that these hostile operations were prosecuted and battles fought without any declaration of war on either side. In fact, there never was a formal declaration of war made by either nation. On May 28th, 1846, Congress passed a resolution declaring that *war existed* between the United States and Mexico, and further resolved that it should be prosecuted until we had attained "indemnity for the past and security for the future."

As evidence of the temper of the minority of that day it should be stated that during the debate upon the resolution a distinguished Senator (Thomas Corwin, of Ohio,) used the following language:

"If I were a Mexican, as I am an American, I would welcome the invaders of my country with bloody hands to hospitable graves!"

That unpatriotic utterance did not reflect the sentiment of the American people. Their thought was voiced in the cotemporary lines:

"Our country, right or wrong!
What manly heart can doubt,
That thus should swell the patriot song,
Thus ring the patriot shout?"

Be but the foe arrayed,
And war's wild trumpet blown,
Cold is the heart that hath not made
Its country's cause its own!"

In response to the call of President Polk for thirty thousand volunteers, 67,339 volunteered promptly, and were accepted by authority of

Congress. They were furnished by the respective States in the following numbers:

Massachusetts	930	Mississippi	2,235
New York	1,690	Louisiana	7,341
New Jersey	420	Tennessee	5,392
Pennsylvania	2,117	Kentucky	4,694
Maryland and District of Columbia	1,274	Ohio	5,334
Virginia	1,182	Michigan	1,072
North Carolina	895	Illinois	5,791
South Carolina	1,120	Wisconsin	146
Georgia	1,987	Iowa	229
Alabama	2,981	Missouri	6,441
Texas	7,392	Arkansas	1,372
Mormons	578	Florida	289
California	541		

To these must be added about ten thousand regulars of the United States Army and twelve hundred marines, making an aggregate of seventy-nine thousand, rank and file, constituting that splendid army, charged with the duty, in connection with our grand old historic navy, of enforcing from Mexico indemnity for the past and security for the future. That demand history attests, they translated into action.

It was not an easy task assigned that army and navy.

The Republic of Mexico consisted of nineteen States, having an aggregate population of nearly nine millions. She had a standing army of seventy thousand, and had called into the field an additional force of nearly two hundred thousand. Her soldiers were well equipped and magnificently uniformed. We could say of her, with literal truth, that her "cohorts were gleaming with purple and gold."

Her coast defences were provided with good armaments and well manned, and her principal seaport, Vera Cruz, was guarded by the castle of San Juan D'Ulloa, mounting four hundred guns, and one of the strongest fortresses in the world. No country upon earth was better adapted by its topography for defensive warfare.

And it had a formidable ally in the deadly climate of its coast, where the tropical sun, shining upon the ever-decaying masses of rank vegetation, burns up the blood with fever, alternating with the icy norther that in an hour will often vary the temperature from summer's heat to winter's cold.

Three lines of operation against Mexico were now determined on:

1. General Taylor was to operate from Matamoras along the line of the Rio Grande.

2. A column under General Kearny was to conquer the Mexican territories of New Mexico and California.

3. A column under General Wool was to enter the northern States of Mexico and conquer Chihuahua.

In pursuance of this plan, General Taylor advanced upon the Mexican army, then in position at Monterey, September 5, 1846.

His army numbered 6,600, and was com-

posed of 3,200 regular troops—of the 1st, 3d, 4th, 5th, 7th, and 8th Infantry, four companies of the 2d Dragoons, five batteries of artillery—and 3,400 volunteers, consisting of the first regiments from Ohio, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee, two Texas regiments, commanded by Brigadier-General Henderson, including Jack Hay's famous rangers, and one battalion from Maryland and the District of Columbia.

The Mexican force consisted of 7,000 regulars and 3,500 volunteers, with an ample supply of artillery, in strong works, covering every approach to the city. Their principal works were known as Forts Diabolo, Teneria, Soldado, Independence, the Bishop's Palace and the Citadel.

Our army attacked in three divisions, commanded by Generals Worth, Twiggs, and Butler, of Kentucky.

The enemy made a fierce and desperate resistance, raising the old Spanish war cry, of "War to the knife, and the knife to the hilt!" The firing was incessant from barricades in the streets, and from the windows and roofs of the dwellings, as our soldiers entered the city after carrying all the outer defences by assault. Our men had actually to dig their way through the walls of the houses in advancing. The attack began on September 20th and ended on the 23d, with the surrender of the enemy.

One who bore a gallant part in that most brilliant achievement wrote of it in a poem of the period—

"We were not many, we who stood
Upon the battle-field that day;
But many a gallant spirit would
Give half his life if he but could
Have been with us at Monterey."

Now here, now there, the shot it hailed
In deadly wreaths of withering spray,
But not a single soldier quailed,
As charging where the strongest lay,
We stormed the heights of Monterey."

Early in the following December all of the regular infantry was withdrawn from General Taylor's army, and ordered to report to Major-General Winfield Scott, who had assumed command in person of the fourth great column of invasion, whose objective point was the capital of Mexico.

General Taylor's army was thus reduced to a force of only 4,500 men of all arms, composed altogether of volunteers, except three batteries of the regular army, and two squadrons of the 2d Dragoons. Its numerical weakness invited attack, and General Santa Anna, the most renowned and skillful of the Mexican commanders, accordingly moved his army against him. That army numbered, according to the Mexican official reports, 23,400 men, two-thirds of whom were regular troops.

General Taylor selected a position admirably adapted for defence at the Rancho of

Buena Vista. The position was marked by narrow defiles, deep ravines and rugged and high ridges that commanded the valley below.

An army dislodged from such a position by such foes is lost, and well each American soldier knew it. The battle began at daylight, on February 23, 1847, by the attack of the enemy in force upon our left flank. That attack was handsomely repulsed by the fire of the 2d Illinois Infantry and the Kentucky Cavalry, with Bragg's and Sherman's splendidly served batteries, a battalion of the 2d and 3d Indiana riflemen, and a company of dismounted Arkansas cavalry.

About 9 o'clock in the morning, another heavy column of Mexicans moved along the road against the centre of our position. This force was checked by the well directed fire of Washington's battery, and diverged to our left, where the enemy was concentrating for a decisive attack. The extreme left of our line was posted on a high and broad plateau, and was composed of the 2d Indiana and 2d Illinois Infantry. The tremendous impact of that attack compelled those regiments to retire after sustaining for some time a terrible cross fire of artillery and a heavy fire on their front by a greatly superior force of infantry. At that crisis of the battle the first Mississippi Rifles, commanded by Col. Jefferson Davis, doubtless saved the day by the rapidity and accuracy of their fire, delivered against the advancing cavalry of the enemy, then exulting in the prospect of speedy victory. Most gallantly did he uphold the starry ensign of the Union, and for that, though his fortunes have foundered since, in grateful memory, for the flag's sake, we respectfully salute him now. The Mississippi Rifles were soon gallantly supported by the 3d Indiana, 1st Illinois, and 2d Kentucky regiments, with a section of Bragg's famous battery, and the ground lost on our left flank was in great part recovered. At the base of the mountain the right flank of the enemy was held in check by the regular dragoons, and Indiana and Arkansas troops, and the destructive fire of our artillery, shattering that it might reach, and reaching that it might shatter the dense lines of the enemy, of whose magnificent cavalry it may be said—

The sheen of the spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

At that moment, when his attacking force had received a disastrous check, Gen. Santa Anna, with characteristic cunning, sent in a flag of truce, and our fire was suspended. This expedient cannot be too much commended in the practice of the art of war, although all writers upon grand strategy have overlooked it in works upon military science. Whenever your attacking columns are about to be repulsed and shattered, hurry up a flag of truce and de-

mand the surrender of your exultant enemy; and then, before he can recover from his astonishment at your sublime impudence, reform your broken columns, and retire with dignity under the shelter of the peaceful symbol. Santa Anna's demand for the surrender of Gen. Taylor's army was promptly declined by "Old Rough and Ready," without thanks.

The battle was soon after renewed by the enemy who brought all his reserves into action. After a tremendous struggle they were again disastrously repulsed. The battle of twelve terrible hours had ended, and "our flag was still there!" Santa Anna retired rapidly with his army into the interior, only taking time to send off a bulletin to the capital, announcing that he had just won a "glorious victory" over the "Barbarians of the North, at Buena Vista."

This victory ended in a blaze of glory the battle-record of the army of occupation under General Taylor.

In the meantime, the army of the West, 2,500 strong, under the command of General Stephen W. Kearny, had been reaping a rich harvest of laurels, winning victory after victory against vast odds, and almost insurmountable natural obstacles.

By a rapid march from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, a distance of 900 miles, in 35 days, New Mexico was taken possession of without firing a shot. Dividing his forces at Santa Fe, Gen. Kearny, with 1,500 dragoons, marched to California, defeated the enemy in a warm engagement at San Pasqual and formed a junction with the California rifle battalion and the marines and sailors from the squadron of the navy, under the command of Commodore Stockton, who had just succeeded the gallant Commodore Sloane, who had previously taken the California port of Monterey.

Prior to the arrival of Gen. Kearny, however, that gallant soldier and untiring explorer, John C. Fremont, had hoisted the American Standard in California. He was there under orders to ascertain a new route to Oregon further south than that usually traveled by emigrants. Upon learning, in May, 1846, that the Mexican governor had ordered all American settlers from that province, and had raised a force to expel them, he recruited a body of 400 men, and defeated the Mexicans in several engagements in the valley of the Sacramento, before he had even heard that war existed between the United States and Mexico, and under his leadership the Americans in California, united with many of the natives, had declared their independence of Mexico on the 5th day of July, 1846.

On Nov. 13, 1846, Col. A. W. Doniphan began his famous march from Santa Fe to Saltillo, his force consisting of two batteries of Missouri light artillery and nine hundred Missouri cavalry. A part of his command was attacked at Brazito, on Christmas day, 1846,

by 1,400 Mexican troops, whom they defeated in twenty minutes.

They again defeated the enemy on February 28, 1847, at the battle of Sacramento, near the city of Chihuahua, and entered that important city triumphantly. On the next day, Doniphan started on his renowned march through the Northern States of Mexico back to Saltillo. He accomplished this march of 1,500 miles, winning victories as he went, in 40 days. This dims the lustre of the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks from the field of Cunaxa, so graphically narrated by Xenophon, their commander and historian. While these events were in progress, Colonel Sterling Price, of Missouri, who had been left by Doniphan in command at Santa Fe, with a force of about 500, consisting of the 2d Missouri Cavalry and a battery of artillery, with a company of New Mexicans, had been, as he always was, active and successful.

On January 19, 1847, Governor Charles Bent, with about thirty-five other Americans, were massacred in cold blood by Mexican troops, in Taos, and soon after a Mexican force of about two thousand cavalry appeared in the vicinity of Santa Fe. Price marched out, and after a desperate conflict defeated them at Canada, about 18 miles north of Santa Fe. The enemy fell back along the road to Taos. Our forces pursued them rapidly and inflicted severe loss upon them at El Embudo, where they made a brief stand, and finally, on the 4th of February, won a decisive victory over them at Taos, the scene of their recent brutal atrocity.

Changing the scene, on the 9th of March, 1847, the army of Mexico, under command of General Winfield Scott, that most regal of American soldiers, never to be named by us, comrades but with uplifted hat, began its victorious movement for the "Halls of the Montezumas." General Scott, on that day, effected the landing of his army at Sacrificios, an island seven miles west of Vera Cruz. The landing was made in sixty-seven surf boats, each holding seventy-five men, under cover of the guns of our fleet, commanded by Commodore Conner, with those brilliant naval officers, Commodores Perry and Tatnall, in command of squadrons of his fleet. Scott's army, upon landing, numbered 13,000, rank and file. He established his lines on the north and east fronts of Vera Cruz on the same day. He planted five siege batteries, built of sandbags, within a thousand yards of the walls of the city. One of the batteries was mounted with 8-inch ship's guns, and manned by sailors from the fleet. A demand for the surrender of the city having been made and refused, our guns opened fire on March 22d, and for three days and nights rained the red ruin of avenging war upon it. On the morning of the 25th, General Landero, commanding the Mexican garrison of the city and the castle of San

Juan d'Ulloa, sent in a flag of truce with overtures of surrender.

He at first proposed to surrender the city alone. General Scott refused this, demanding the castle also. This demand was finally acceded to, and the surrender of the Mexican army at Vera Cruz, 8,000 strong, was formally made on March 29, 1847, when we entered in triumph the beautiful city of the "true cross."

On April 8th our army took up its line of march along the national road for the capital of Mexico, distant 280 miles.

On April 14 we found ourselves in the presence of the army of Santa Anna, 20,000 strong, posted on the lofty heights of Cerro Gordo. The mountain ridges on which he had taken position had been thoroughly fortified by that enterprising, though cruel, subtle and faithless Mexican general, and they completely commanded the route to the capital. At the instance, and under the direction of that unsurpassed and stainless soldier, Capt. Robert E. Lee, of the Corps of Engineers, a road was cut through the dense forest on the enemy's left, so as to enable us to take his position in reverse. This work occupied three days, and while it was in progress, on the afternoon of the 17th, the enemy attacked our working parties and were repulsed with loss, a part of Twiggs' division, under Col. Harney, of the dragoons, pressing them back to the summit of the ridge.

On the morning of the 18th, at dawn, we attacked in force, that gallant Irishman and unquailing soldier, Gen. James Shields, commanding our column of attack, on the Mexican left, with a view to cut his line of retreat. In three hours the army of Santa Anna was routed. The battle was done, and far up on the crest of the mountain range where the eagle lives alone, through the drifting clouds of smoke, the white stars of our country's banner shone serenely on their blue field. Our loss was 97 killed and 408 wounded, while that of the enemy was about 1,400 in killed and wounded and 3,000 prisoners. Harney's Dragoons pursued the enemy hotly, and sabred their scattered columns for fifteen miles along the road to Jalapa. At that city the army of Scott was reduced to about 6,000, by the mustering out of the greater part of his volunteer forces, which had enlisted for one year, their term of service having expired.

Leaving Jalapa, on the 21st, we captured Perote and its strong castle, a full bastion work of 80 guns, on the 22d; and after halting there to rest for a few days, we took Puebla, the chief manufacturing city of Mexico, with a population of 75,000, on May 15, after a desultory fire from the enemy in its streets.

Here General Scott was obliged to lose several months awaiting reinforcements from home. Every day's delay increased our hazard, as the enemy was collecting a vast army

and fortifying along every approach to his capital. At length, on the morning of August 7th, 1847, our army moved out of Puebla on its march for the city of Mexico, all our bands playing the Star Spangled Banner.

It numbered then about 10,000, of all arms, consisting of four divisions, namely:

First Division—General Worth.—1st brigade, Col. Garland; 2d and 3d regiments of artillery, 4th infantry, and Duncan's battery. 2d brigade, Col. Clarke; 5th, 6th, and 8th infantry.

Second Division—General Twiggs.—1st brigade, Gen. P. F. Smith; mounted rifle regiment, 1st artillery, 3d infantry, Taylor's battery. 2d brigade, Col. Riley; 4th artillery, 1st infantry, 7th infantry.

Third Division—General Pillow.—1st brigade, Gen. Cadwalader; 11th and 14th infantry and voltigeurs. 2d brigade, Gen. Pierce, 9th, 12th, and 15th infantry.

Fourth Division—General Quitman.—1st brigade, Gen. Shields; South Carolina volunteers, New York volunteers. 2d brigade, 2d Pennsylvania volunteers, detachment of U. S. marines.

The cavalry force of the army was under command of Bvt. Brig. Gen. Wm. S. Harney, and comprised detachments of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Dragoons.

After a toilsome march of eighty miles, across mountain ranges and along a rugged and broken road, the army, on the afternoon of August 17, 1847, looked down for the first time on the valley of Mexico, and on its magnificent capital, with the golden crosses of its 160 churches glittering in the light of the setting sun. There lay before us the same lake, mirroring the same snow-crowned mountains in its glassy bosom, on which Cortez, with his steel clad warriors, had gazed in the same month 326 years before. There, too, stretched out the same causeway, over which the knights of old Spain had charged, with their battle-cry of St. Iago, the devoted forces of the doomed Montezuma. In order to avoid the formidable fortress of El Penon, that commanded the approach by the national road to the city, General Scott, after reaching a point within nine miles of the city, ordered the army to countermarch, with a view to turn the lake on the south. This required a march of about twenty eight miles, which was effected over roads deemed impassable by the enemy, and on August 18th the entire army was concentrated at the town of St. Augustine, about ten miles from the city of Mexico. The enemy were then distant about five or six miles, at Contreras, a strong position held by General Valencia, with a Mexican force about 8,000 strong, with fortifications mounting twenty-six guns. These General Scott determined to take in reverse, which was done effectually by a night march of eight miles, over the pedregal or volcanic ground, hitherto deemed im-

practicable for any army. At sunrise on the 20th the assault was made on the rear and flanks of the enemy by Riley's, Cadwalader's, and Shield's brigades, all under the command of General Persifer F. Smith, whom General Shields, though outranking him, had magnanimously permitted to retain the command that he might carry out dispositions made prior to the arrival of Shields on the ground. The whole line of entrenchments was stormed and the battle won in seventeen or eighteen minutes. The enemy broke at the first assault, and fled in the direction of the city, but hundreds of them were captured by the New York volunteers and the Palmetto Regiment, of Shields' Brigade, that had been posted for the purpose of cutting off their retreat.

At this battle two guns of the 4th artillery, that were lost, without dishonor, at Buena Vista, were recaptured from the enemy. Old artillerists, who were with them when they were lost, kissed and hugged them with delight at their recovery. The army, after resting a few hours, marched against the main body of the enemy, then occupying a vast intrenched camp at Cherubusco, about eight miles from the city. We were soon in presence of the Mexican army, 30,000 strong, commanded by General Santa Anna, composed of the best troops of Mexico, embracing several thousand volunteers, the very flower of her chivalric youth.

The battle began at noon and ended at sundown, with the complete defeat of the enemy. We captured 5,000 prisoners and 86 pieces of artillery. Cherubusco, in fact, was a series of four distinct battles, fought against as many independent fortified positions, and, with that of Contreras, made five distinct victories won on the same day by the American army—less than 9,000—engaged against an aggregate force of not less than 38,000. Our loss during that day was about 1,100 killed and wounded; while that of the Mexican army, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, was not less than 7,000. Among the gallant spirits of our army who went up to God from that stricken field—I trust that I will be pardoned for naming alone my old commander, Col. Pierce M. Butler, of the Palmetto Regiment, one whose martial form and benign face are ever present in my memory. General Scott well wrote of him, a few days after the battle: "A soldier from his youth up, by his death he has added another illustrious name to the long line of South Carolina's departed heroes."

Time will not permit me to chronicle the deeds of heroism done at Cherubusco, but yet, among the many, I must note one of the most daring that has passed into history. When, in the final charge upon the enemy's work, known as the *tete du pont*, or bridge head, the way was blocked by a burning ammunition wagon that threatened a destructive explosion,

Sergeant A. M. Kenaday, of the 3d Dragoons, attached to Worth's escort, now the worthy secretary of our National Association, sprang from his horse and, calling three of his men to his aid, actually threw the burning packages of gunpowder into the river below, thus saving many lives and enabling our charging columns to advance. The dragoons, under Harney, followed the flying enemy fast and far; and the daring Major Phil. Kearny, with a hundred dragoons, not hearing the recall sounded, or, rather, not heeding it, pursued them up to the walls of the city, sabreing gunners at its very gate, where he lost his right arm, and returned mounted behind one of his soldiers.

We were prevented from advancing to the city on that evening by the arrival of a flag of truce from Santa Anna, who proposed an armistice of twenty days, on the declared ground that a treaty of peace was pending between the two republics. General Scott assented, on the novel, and to us important condition, that he should be allowed to send a train into the city of Mexico and there purchase supplies for his army. This was accordingly done.

On September 6th, General Scott declared the armistice at an end, having discovered that it was a mere scheme, on the part of the wily Mexican general, to gain time, thus enabling him to reinforce his army and strengthen his fortifications, which he had been doing ever since the armistice commenced.

At daylight on September 8th, we again advanced upon the enemy. Santa Anna, with his army, occupied Molino del Rey, or the King's Mills, a series of massive stone buildings, surrounded by high walls, about one mile and a half west of the castle of Chapultepec, and about three miles from the city. His force consisted of 12,000 men and 24 pieces of artillery. Our attacking columns consisted of 3,400 men, with Drum's, Huger's, and Duncan's batteries, the last named composed of two 24-pounders, the whole commanded by General Worth, the Marshal Ney of the army. We attacked in three columns. After a brief, but severe cannonade, our centre column, of 500 men, under the command of Major Wright, advanced to the assault, and, although met by a severe fire of artillery and musketry, took the enemy's battery in their front, but the Mexicans, seeing their small number, rallied in force and, delivering a destructive volley, drove this column back. Cadwalader's right wing, together with Stewart's rifles, that had been left to support Huger's battery, now entered the battle at the centre of our line. Thus reinforced, we quickly broke the enemy's line at the centre, isolating his two wings. Garland's brigade, assisted by the effective fire of Drum's battery, attacked the enemy's left, and, after some desperate fighting, we drove him from his seeming impregnable position, firing his own captured guns into his broken

and retreating columns. While our right and centre were thus engaged, Col. McIntosh assaulted the Casa Mata, a strong stone citadel, or half bastioned work, on the enemy's right, aided by Duncan's heavy battery and a company of voltigeurs. The enemy abandoned Casa Mata, and the day was won. In proportion to the force engaged this was for us the bloodiest battle of the war. We had 950 killed and wounded, among them sixty-five officers. The Mexican loss was 2,000 killed and wounded, and 850 prisoners.

The victory was important, as Molino del Rey was the principal cannon foundry in Mexico, and its guns also commanded some of the approaches to the castle of Chapultepec. This castle was a strong fortress of masonry, mounting 16 guns, and was occupied by General Bravo with about 2,500 regular soldiers together with 300 cadets, for it was the National Military Academy of Mexico. It was situated on the crest of a steep, rocky height, which rose 150 feet above the road below. About midway of the ascent was a strong redoubt, and below that a heavy stone wall, with a banquette, each running around nearly the entire front and well manned with troops. Our batteries opened fire on the castle early on the morning of the 12th September, and by night had made several wide breaches in its walls.

At 6 a. m., on the 13th, our columns moved to the assault. The entire army was brought into action, except a part of Worth's division, which was held in reserve near Molino del Rey. On our charging columns swept, the regulars attacking on the west face and the volunteers under Quitman and Shields on the east, while Smith's brigade wheeled to the southeast and carried a battery at the foot of the slope.

In a whirlwind of fire from cannon and musketry that swept down the hill that was everywhere ablaze with the flashing guns of the enemy, our men pressed forward, our artillery in the road below firing over their heads as they advanced. Another desperate rush and our bayonets sparked at every breach. They sprang into the breaches, and soon the flag of the First New York Volunteers floated out above the battlements, with its inspiring motto, "Excelsior," and announced that Chapultepec was ours!

Worth's division pressed the enemy on his principal line of retreat in the direction of the Eastern or San Cosmo Gate of the city.

Scott, intending to make his main attack at this point as the most vulnerable, ordered Quitman to make a feint and occupy the attention of the enemy at the Garita de Belen on the west. Quitman moved rapidly with his division along the causeway, carrying battery after battery as he went, determined to convert his intended feint into a real attack and win a victory in violation of orders. Far to

the front, springing from arch to arch of the huge stone aqueduct, the Palmetto Regiment and Stewart's company of regular rifles were intermingled in their approach to the well-fortified gate, firing rapidly as they advanced.

Drum's battery of three pieces then soon galloped rapidly to the front and opened a rapid and effective fire, which was at once replied to by the enemy, with at least twenty heavy guns. In a few minutes nearly every officer and man of this splendid battery was killed or wounded. Its chivalric commander lay in the road with both thighs shattered by a cannon-ball, but true to the line of his duty, living and dying, he called out to the infantry in the arches: "For God's sake, save my guns!" They quickly responded, and met the advancing foe with the bayonet, driving them back and following them into their works; and the last sound that reached the ears of the noble Captain Simon Drum was the "shout of victory from his comrades at the gate.

The magnificent infantry of Smith's and Pierce's brigade also were delivering their destructive fire at the enemy on our front and flanks, and at twenty minutes past one o'clock on the afternoon of September 13th, 1847, the Palmetto flag of South Carolina was planted on the walls of the city of Mexico, the first foreign ensign that had waved over that spot since Hernando Cortez on August 13th, 1521, had there unfurled the royal standard of Spain. Our further advance was checked at the Belen Gate by the fire of a citadel with eight guns about three hundred yards within the walls. Its commander, General Flores, later in the afternoon, offered to surrender, on condition that Quitman would give him a receipt for all his ordnance, quartermaster and commissary stores. This was finally assented to. That Mexican should be regarded as the champion red-tapeist of the world. The citadel surrendered the next morning at sunrise.

Worth's division, after a desperate resistance, drove the enemy from every position at and around the San Cosmo Gate, and at eight o'clock on the night of the 13th bivouacked within the walls of the city. At about noon on the 14th the entire army was united in the main plaza or great square of Mexico, and the stars and stripes were soon unfurled in all their glory above the halls of the Montezumas.

We had conquered the capital of Mexico, and with six thousand American soldiers we stood triumphant amid its hostile population of near two hundred thousand souls.

After the fall of the capital, Santa Anna collected the scattered fragments of his beaten army, and, early in October, attacked our garrison at Puebla, which consisted of the First Pennsylvania Regiment, under Colonel Childs. That command occupied Fort Loreto, in the western suburb of the city, and made a gallant and successful defence during an active siege of twenty days. Santa Anna had sum-

moned the garrison to surrender, stating, with his usual lying tactics, that he had utterly routed the army of General Scott. That statement, Colonel Childs replied, had "no truth in it." Santa Anna drew off his forces, about 5,000 strong, on learning of the approach of Gen. Joseph Lane, who was advancing from the coast with needed reinforcements for Scott's army. Soon after this, on October 21, 1847, a portion of General Lane's force, under the command of the renowned Texas ranger, Col. Sam Walker, of the District of Columbia, although but 350 strong, attacked and routed about 2,000 of the enemy at Huamantla. This victory was dearly purchased. While Walker was rallying his command to pursue the flying enemy he was mortally wounded by a shot fired from the roof of a house. There was an affection full of romantic beauty between him and the celebrated ranger, Capt. Addison Gillespie, who fell in the charge at Monterey. Gillespie's last words were, "Bury me under the cottonwood trees, near the Alamo, in San Antonio, and tell Sam Walker good bye for me." Walker's last words were, "Carry me to San Antonio, and bury me in the same grave with Addison Gillespie." The two immortal rangers rest together in the land they loved so well, companions in glory and the grave. They were friends in life, and in death they were not divided.

On January 24th, Capt. Henley, with his command of 200 Missourians, attacked a body of 500 Mexicans at Moro, and defeated them. That gallant soldier also fell in the moment of victory. The closing battle of the war was fought by Gen. Sterling Price, at Rosales, New Mexico, on March 16, 1848. He there defeated, with but 250 Missouri volunteers, a force of nearly 1,000 Mexicans, under command of General Trias, killing about 300 and capturing their commanding general, with 42 other officers, and 11 pieces of artillery. No more knightly soldier or braver and truer man than Sterling Price ever struck the last blow in his country's cause.

The Mexican war was ended by a treaty of peace, concluded at the hacienda of Guadalupe Hidalgo, on February 2d, 1848. Peace was proclaimed by President Polk, July 4th, 1848. In this necessarily rapid and imperfect sketch of the salient events of the war, I have had to omit, comrades, even the name of many an unforgotten hero. It was no holiday war. It was replete with toilsome and weary marches, with blistered and bleeding feet, through hot sands, under a tropical sun, and over jagged rocks and snowy mountain ranges, where horses and riders perish'd with cold.

It had its many dark days, when the soldier was faint with hunger and his tongue parched with thirst. It was full of nameless tragedies, both on bloody fields, in front of many a battery's smoking guns, and in the deeper gloom

of the fever stricken hospitals, where the living, in their anguish, envied the deep repose of the dead.

I will not attempt to describe the grand scenery of Mexico, its wondrous climate, or the endless variety of its agricultural products. As early as 1804, the great Humboldt wrote of it: "All the climates and all the products of the earth can be found here."

Least of all will I attempt, in such an assemblage of battle-scarred veterans, to describe the fair women of Mexico. With them we had no *battles*, but yet must confess that we had with them many warm *engagements* in which we were always compelled to surrender to their arms.

But these things belong to the dear, dead summers of the heart. They come back like bright phantoms, robed in airy drapery, to visit the silent halls of memory, where once again the veteran of 1846 beholds, with ardent gaze, the joyous "fandango" of Mexico.

"Where the glances of her virgins were ever archly deep,
And their dark eyes ever full of passion and of sleep."

In that memorable war, comrades, which lasted two and a half years, we fought seventy battles and engagements without the final loss of a single gun or American ensign.

Engaged always against heavy odds, we bore the honor of this great republic triumphantly on the points of our ever-advancing swords and bayonets, on fields—

"Ploughed deep with hurrying hoof and wheel,
Shot-sown and bladed thick with steel!"

Blended with this honorable reflection we proudly recall the fact that we marched nearly four thousand miles through the country of an enemy, alien to us in race, language and religion, and performed no act to wound the modesty of woman or sully the sanctity of her person. The blaze of no defenceless home-stead lighted up our line of march, and no vesper bell ceased to sound because of our coming.

We were always merciful in the hour of victory, and while we vindicated the prowess of our country, we illustrated its civilization.

Thus should it always have been, and thus may it ever be with the American soldier!

What have been the material results of that victorious war?

By our arms, our country won the vast territories of California, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, and Idaho, and made it easy to acquire Arizona for a merely nominal sum. We thereby added one million square miles, or 610,000,000 of acres to the territory of the United States, nearly doubling its area. According to authoritative statistics there has

been taken from the mines and rivers of the territories thus acquired, since 1848, gold and silver of the value of \$3,000,000,000. Averaging the soldier at 140 pounds, this amount is sufficient to award to every soldier, actually engaged in the battles in Mexico, were even all now living, his weight in pure gold. Of the 85,000 men who participated in those battles, less than 6,000 survive. This fact is attested by a most careful census of the survivors. Yet we are told, in the discussion of the bill so long pending, to pension the veterans of the Mexican war, that "too many are still living" to warrant the granting of pensions to aid in maintaining them in their declining years. This is the base economy of ingratitude. Such an objector could only be satisfied by a proviso in the bill, that it should not take effect during the lifetime of any veteran, and the amount appropriated should be covered into the treasury of the United States, upon the death of the last survivor. May the fittest of you comrades survive the Congressman who makes this objection and live many years after he has beheld the slow but certain justice of his country fully vindicated against the fat-ribbed advocate of lean appropriations for disabled veterans of the nation's wars.

During this reunion, comrades, of soldiers who parted nearly thirty-six years ago on fields afar, one subject has been conspicuous by its absence. There has been no allusion to the war which transpired among us since that parting—a war which shook this great Republic from center to circumference, with the tread of more than a million of armed men! On the part of veterans of the Union army, this has been the silence of magnanimity, worthy alike of the noble victors and the heroic vanquished. Let that war only be recalled with a deep sense of gratitude to an overruling Providence, that to-day all our countrymen dwell contented under one glorious flag. Speaking for the ex-confederate soldier of the South, I here declare, with all the solemn sanctity of a judicial oath, that whatever his political party, he is true to the flag of his country. If he ever dreams of future wars, it is with the fervent hope that he, may yet live to bear the ensign of the Union into lands that have never been sheltered under its beneficent folds, and among a people who have never felt the power of our eagle's beak. Henceforth the Union and Confederate veterans will be in peace friends, and in war brothers in arms.

After Judge Mackey concluded, the band gave the National airs of Mexico and the United States, while the guests on the platform showered congratulations upon the orator. A vote of thanks was passed by acclamation.

At the Grand Banquet, which concluded the proceedings of the reunion, Judge Mackey was called upon to respond to the VIIth toast, and we quote his remarks in this connection :

VIII. "WOMAN!—Her voice is the music of the march of life. She carries the only arms to which the American soldier will ever surrender."

RESPONSE BY T. J. MACKEY, OF THE PALMETTO REGIMENT.

Mr. President and Comrades: "Woman as a toast, or otherwise, is a most difficult and delicate subject to deal with. This is the last, in order, of the regular toasts. It was probably made last upon the theory of Louis the Fourteenth, of France, that "there is a woman at the bottom of everything." She has certainly been the impelling force of every benign movement in every age and clime.

I do not accept as true the statement of some historians, that a chivalric respect for woman is the outgrowth of civilization. On the contrary, the annals of race development attest that a gentle consideration and respect for woman must precede every high civilization.

Satan himself, in the garden of Eden, paid a lofty tribute to her moral pre-eminence over man. Archangel as he was, and though fallen, with all the brightness of an archangel's intellect, he went in person to tempt her. Nor did even he venture to hold out before her any base allurement; knowing the purity of her nature, he beguiled her with the assurance that if she ate of the fruit of the tree, which was in the midst of the garden, she would be as one of the gods, knowing good and evil. But when Adam was to be tempted, no archangel was wasted upon him. Satan knew that he would fall at sight. He doubtless persuaded Eve to

give him some of the fruit, and then basely volunteered his testimony against her. Many of Adam's descendants have done the same vile thing—a clear case of hereditary transmission of a criminal propensity.

The traditions and annals that have come down from the early Christian church inform us that in the days of persecution many men recanted their profession of faith in Christianity at the stake, but no woman ever reanted. Faithful until death, wrapped in the martyr's robe of fire, she went up to God. In suffering for a great principle she has always proved herself superior in fortitude to man, who is naturally a compromiser.

The history of every age and of every civilized land bears witness that no good cause ever found its betrayer in a woman.

" Not she with traitorous kiss her Savior stung,
Not she betrayed him with unholy tongue;
She, while Apostles fled, could danger brave,
Last at His cross, and earliest at His grave."

She is man's special providence and chief moral safeguard, walking by his side to counsel, comfort and sustain. Her voice is more than the music of the march of life, for the cordial "well done!" from her lips and the trusting clasp of her hand furnish the richest reward for life's most honorable victories. Grateful, indeed, ought we to be to the Giver of all good for having made woman what she is. If she were a degree higher in the scale of being she would be too pure for man's companionship, while if she were a little lower she might not suffice for the necessities of man's mental and moral natures. As it is, she is—

" A being not too pure and good
For human nature's daily food,
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel's light."

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Hon. Thomas J. Mackey.



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